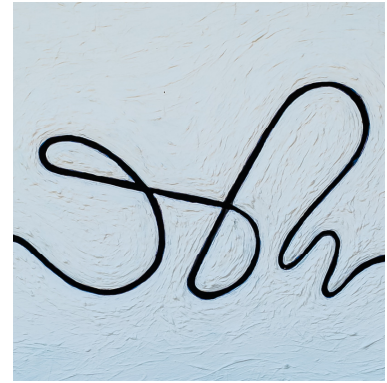
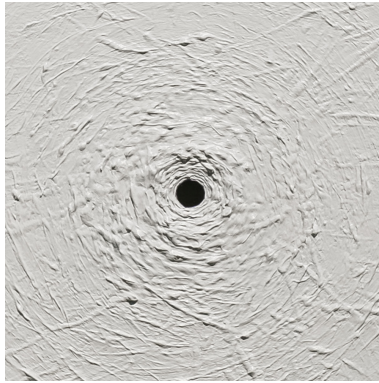




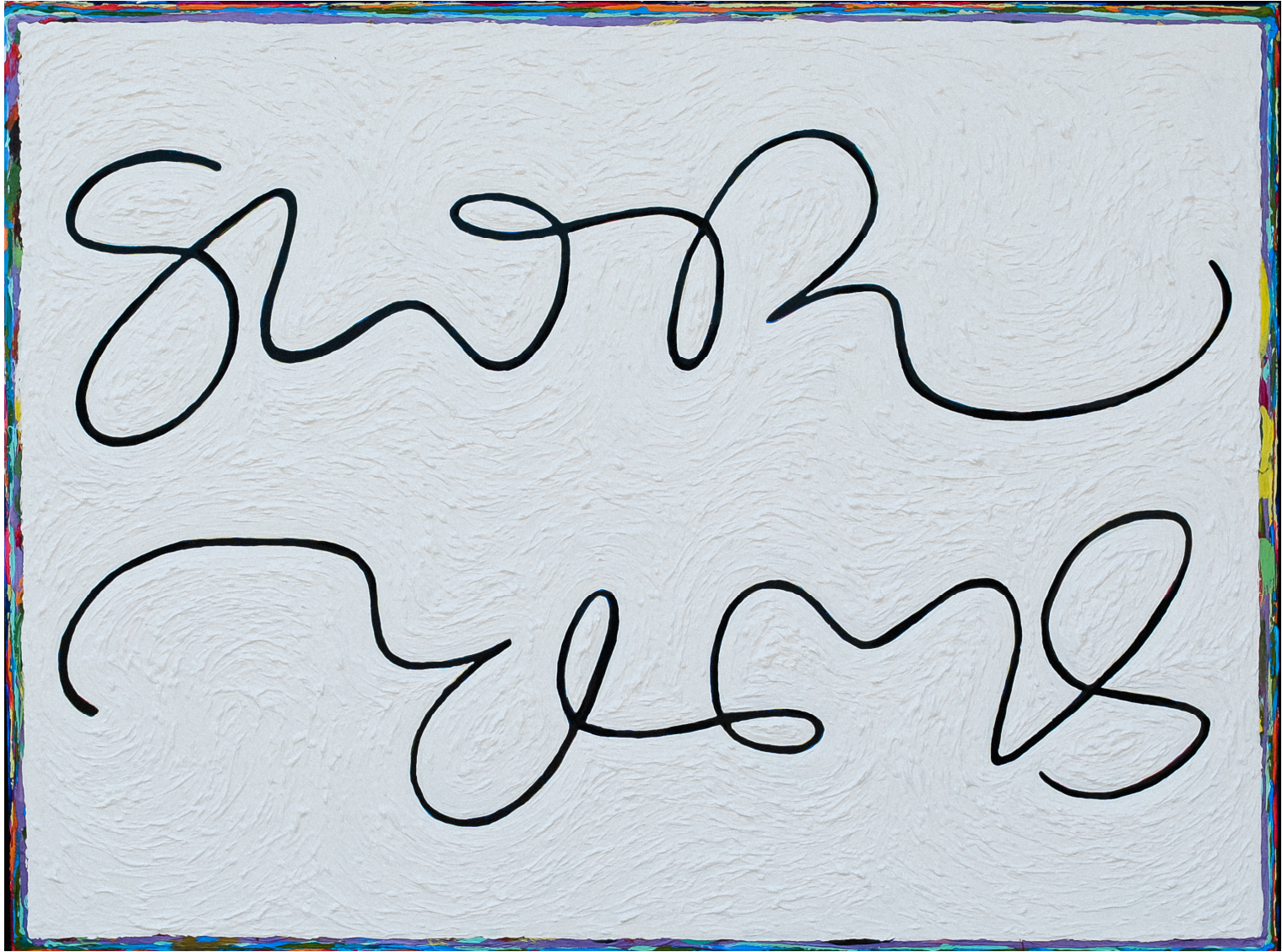
portersteve



artworks
2020

*** IDENTITY * SECRECY * UNIVERSALITY * STORY ***

portersteve Signatures



He's only written his name...

Porter Steve's Signature paintings are about identity. Signatures are now an (almost) outmoded means of proving who we are for transactions. Behind the need to prove who we are is the need to keep secrets, to keep safe the keys to our finances. For any signer signing, their signature is a kind of self-portrait, with the sweep of each line revealing an incite into character.

Everyone can write their name, so within signatures, there is a universality. These artworks are recreated everyday, everywhere. A benchmark for childhood is being able to write ones own name. Behind every name there is the story of how they arrived at the moment where they are writing it down, and what that name means to others that know it.

Signatures are a kind of branding, a unique logo, an identification with, and of, the self. They are a signal of our commitment. The infamous dotted line awaits. The small print shrinks away from our gaze.

Signatures are connected with the famous. People collect the autographs of the actors and the singers. Books are signed so value is increased through the contact and the mark of the signer. Signatures are our key mark, our paper trail scattered as we walk tentatively into the woods.

In physical terms, the Signature on the artworks are surrounded by layers and layers of thickly applied acrylic in bright colours. Some of these colours are still visible at the edges. The colours have then been whited out, concealing some of the painting's truth but leaving thousands of shadow-hungry textures in their wake.



portersteve Secrets



The Art you can't even see...

Portersteve's Secret artworks offer something that is there, but it cannot be seen.

What cannot be seen can only be looked at by breaking the seal and damaging the artwork. Knowledge has a price. The "secret" is an artwork hidden beneath the smaller, hinged canvas. Every Secret has a different artwork concealed, so even by knowing one, one cannot know all.

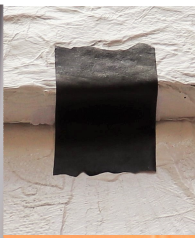
Today you can look at anything. You can look at everything. Think of something and type it into a search engine. Five seconds later (or sooner) there it is. Think of anything and your eyes can own it, your mind can judge it, your memory can peruse it. Portersteve conceals and suspends that knowledge. The secret exists, but breaking the seal and knowing it would kill the artwork. What is the identity of the secret? The imagination is left up to its own devices... Well, what could it possibly be?

Portersteve's Secret artworks literally put temptation in your way. It is like a slice of cake on a plate that you mustn't eat. And you know you'll feel worse if you do and feel better if you don't. Of course you could secretly break the seal (having bought it) and then reseal the seal, (having sneaked a look). But could you ever forgive yourself. It would be like cheating on yourself with yourself. Portersteve won't care. He has your money.

Secrets are powerful things. Ask any kid.

On a quantum level, what is concealed under the hinged canvas only really exists when it is observed. Before it is observed, it can be anything. It could be everything. What is there is there, the reductionists might cry. Well, let them cry. The mystery is as rich as it ever was. Everything is still a secret.

Secrets are universal. Every day we conceal and reveal. Every day the masks rise and fall accordingly. Each canvas is collaged with wallpapers (a utilitarian joke – presenting scraps of common old wallpaper as art) before being painted in colourful acrylics. These are then whited over, leaving the surface textured with colours only visible at the edges.



* IDENTITY * SECRECY * UNIVERSALITY * STORY *



portersteve Handprints



It's a slap in the face!

Portersteve's Handprint paintings are all about the ultimate human symbol: the hand. The fingers and those opposable thumbs that service all the mischief.

The shape of the hand, like the silhouette of the human form is deeply ingrained within us. It is a fundamental part of identity. Like knowing something like the back of your hand. They are with us from dawn to dusk, doing good, doing bad, doing indifference.

But a child could have made this! Well, yes, they could. And that's the point. The Universality is everything. In schools and nurseries and homes everywhere, artworks are being made right now. Just dip your hand and push. No training or specialist skills are required and the tools are on the ends of your arms. All you need is paint and paper. Or mud and a space to press. Have a go. Spoiler alert: could be feet next.

The exception here is that these handprints are made by Portersteve, placing them within an artistic context, and teasing debate.

The hand says everything. Is it waving, saluting, celebrating, surrendering? Is it grabbing, preventing, connecting, agreeing? In respect to the artworks, the viewer decides. And their decisions may change at any time.

The Handprint is made first by Portersteve painting his hand in black and pushing it down onto the canvas. No shocks there. Just like an adult, the soap and hot water are at the ready nearby. The dried handprints are then painted around in brightly colourful acrylics. These are then whited over, leaving only the edges visible and textures like water. As if the hands are breaking through a surface from another place, which in a way, they are.



* IDENTITY * SECRECY * UNIVERSALITY * STORY *



portersteve Interactions



A breath of fresh air...

Portersteve's Interaction artworks are designed to be engaged with and altered. This presents an opposition to the idea that art must be roped off and revered from a safe distance with no flash photography (please). By interacting with the artworks and therefore changing them, the person becomes the artist, choosing which moves to make and observing their consequences. This is the universality of the artworks.

There are thousands of combinations available. Enough for everyone to have their own personal identifiable version. They are about the consequences of actions and the reactions to actions. It is the ying and the yang, the stark zeroes and ones of the digital gates, the black white on off yes no. Except for all the different colours and potential combinations, that is.

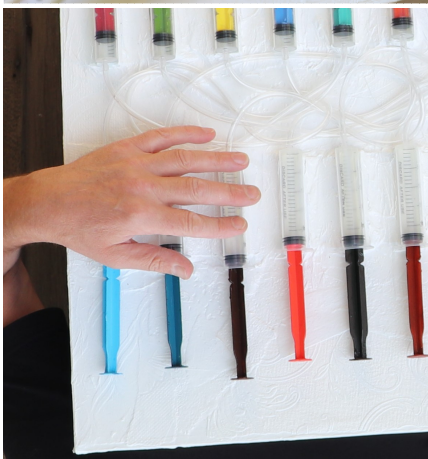
The artworks are environmentally sound, powered by (standard) air being pushed through tubes by the plungers and other plungers being (eerily) shifted as a result. It is easily possible to learn which colour connects with which, but at first engagement, these connections remain a secret.

The works have medical undertones, using pipes and syringes. Make a choice, push the plunger, deliver the placebo. So are all our interactions (choices) being harvested to inform insurance companies, retail monoliths? On a philosophical level, do our actions make any difference? In this context, as with any other: they do make a difference. But it is a small difference. You can change the colours around. But they are still the colours.

The canvas is collaged with wallpapers (the same old utilitarian joke) and small wooden cradles are glued on. Everything is painted white. The barrels of the syringes are glued onto the wooden cradles. The previously painted plungers are inserted. Then you can start choosing. You don't even need an account. There is no password.



*** IDENTITY * SECRECY * UNIVERSALITY * STORY ***



portersteve iDots



It's the least I can do...

It's a dot. Yes, it's a dot. Just the one. And it's a dot that likes to ask questions. More of a full-start than a full-stop in contemplatory terms.

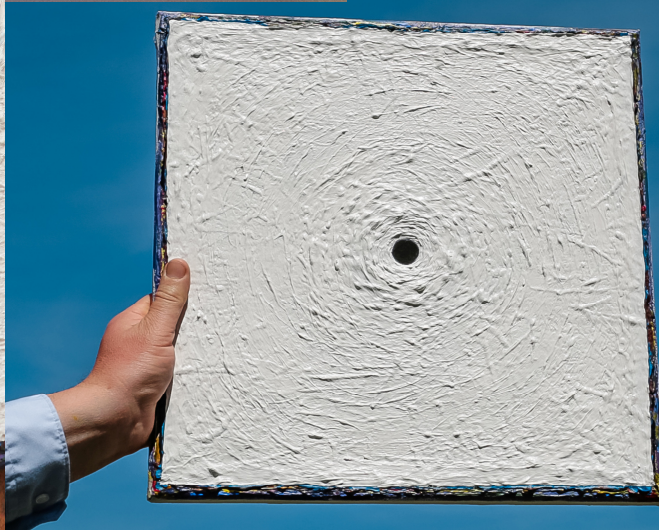
So, is it (the dot) a baby universe caught in the first fraction of a second of existence? Or is it one of those famously elusive sub atomic particles, magnified a trillion trillion times over? The ones that allegedly contain the secrets to everything. But what is all that white stuff around the edges about. It is nothing? Is nothing even possible?

PorterSteve's iDot artworks revel in the most basic, unembellished marks it is possible for a human to make. It is the sucker-punch between every sentence. The pause for breath. It is the comma in disguise. And you only get one singularity. The iDot can watch you from the wall, pleased or displeased with your activities but never communicating judgement. It is half a morse code, unable to reveal its secrets.

The dot is everywhere. iDot artworks are being recreated everywhere and all the time. By businessmen with fountain pens pausing over their contracts, by children with stubby pencils about to be unleashed in their nurseries. Anyone can make one. Just pick up a tool and you're off. This is the wonderful universality of the dot.

The "i" is a joke about how technology uses our individualism to sell us stuff. And it is only one "i" away from *idiot*. The size of each dot is based upon the penny or cent, a basic unit of western currency. The dot is then painted around and around in brightly coloured acrylics. These are then concealed by being whited out, except the edges. The textures cast shadows making the artworks change in every light situation.

iDots might also just slightly be a cheeky little reminder of death.
Opps, sorry.



* IDENTITY * SECRECY * UNIVERSALITY * STORY *

portersteve Paintworks



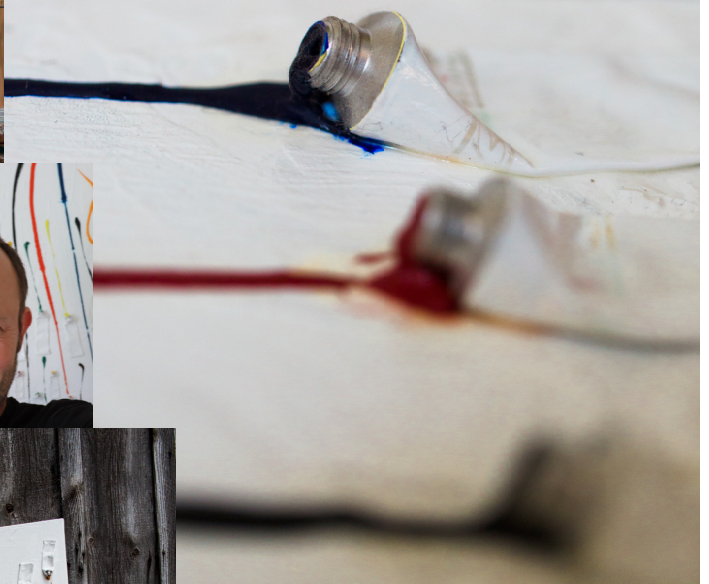
Searching for the toothpaste...

Portersteve's Paintwork paintings focus on the raw materials: the canvas (surface) and the paint. The paint is squeezed out from the tubes directly onto the canvas. Marks made in this way cannot be undone. They are a total commitment and require a certain confidence. It is a decision made that must be stuck to. The tubes are then glued on at the end of their deposit.

Some Paintworks are more organised and repetitious. Some are freer and more chaotic. The idea of the Paintworks is for the viewer to identify visual elements within the combinations of colours, lines and textures. Perhaps they will see a shape that reminds them of something? Perhaps they will notice something in the composition that suggests a broader narrative or story? Perhaps it is just pretty colours presented in a pleasing (or unpleasing) way? Perhaps it is so uninteresting that it fails to grab any attention. These are all equally interesting. Artworks are just objects in the end.

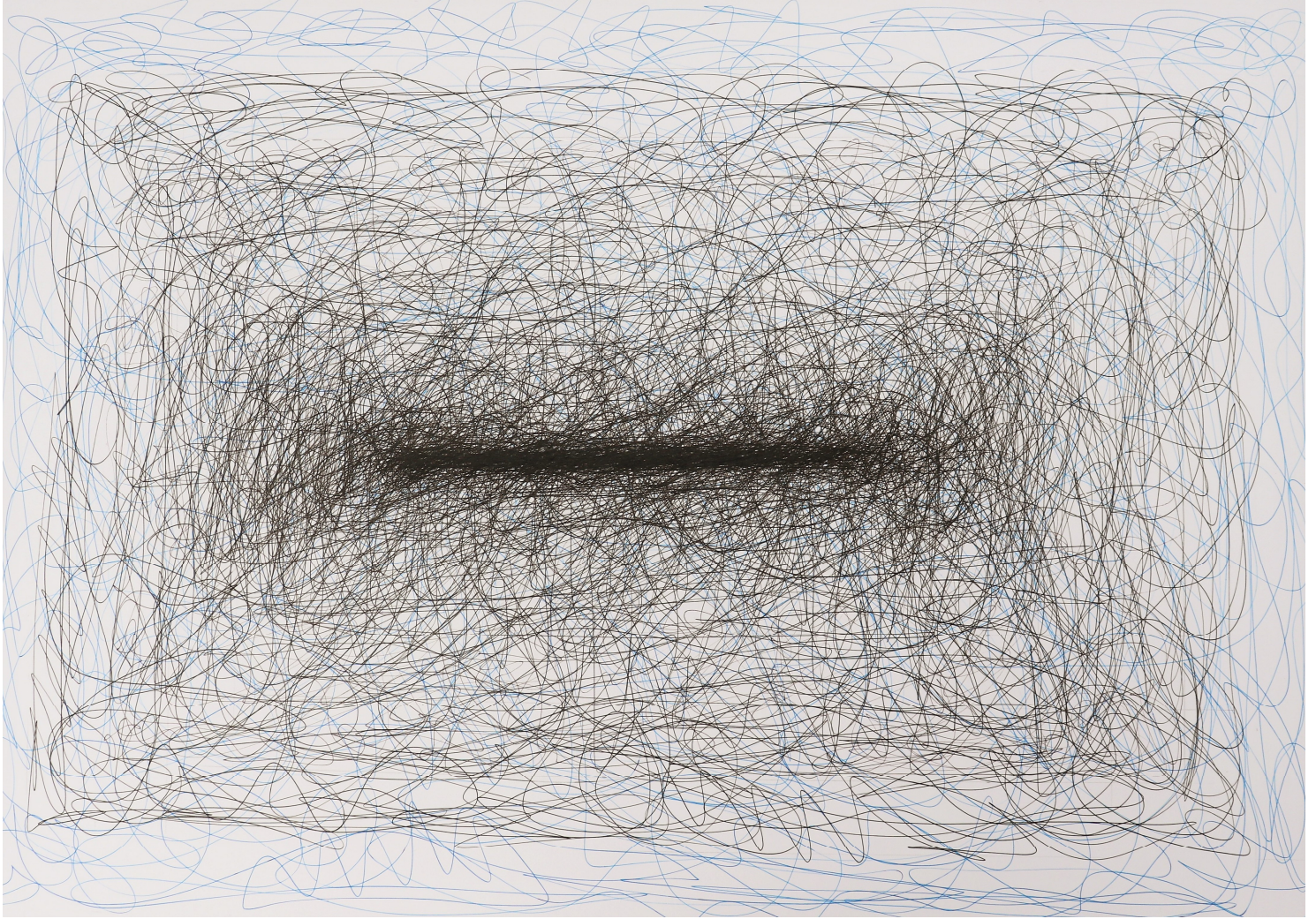
Originally, in an effort to encourage links between the artworks and something recognisable, Portersteve designed his own (slightly ridiculous set of) titles. But eventually this was felt to undermine the do-it-yourself element of the work.

The skills to create this kind of work are quite low-grade. This is the universality and accessibility. It was simply a case of playing around and seeing what worked. Hitting the tubes with a hammer created more mess than benefit. You don't need to be an artist to be an artist.



*** IDENTITY * SECRECY * UNIVERSALITY * STORY ***

portersteve Scribbles



The fate all pens fear...

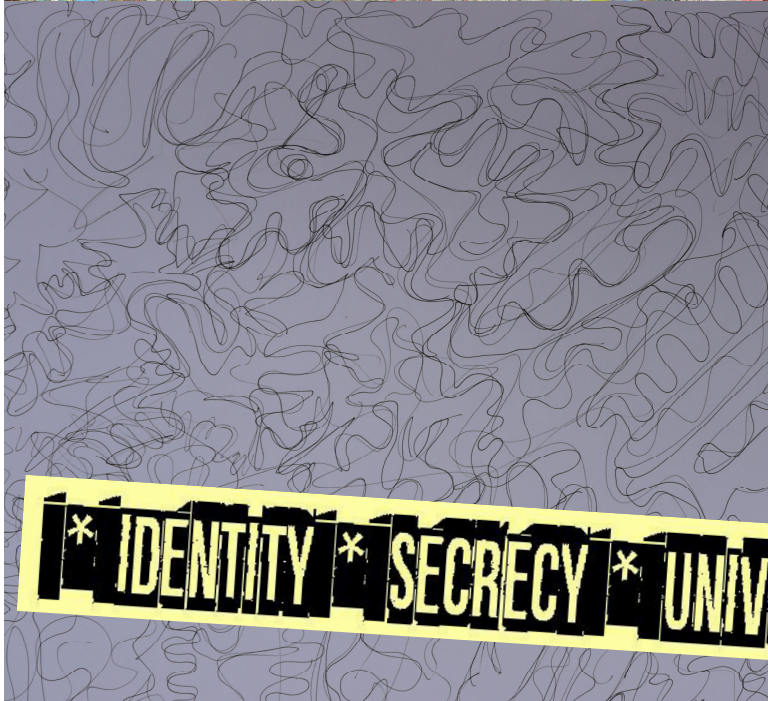
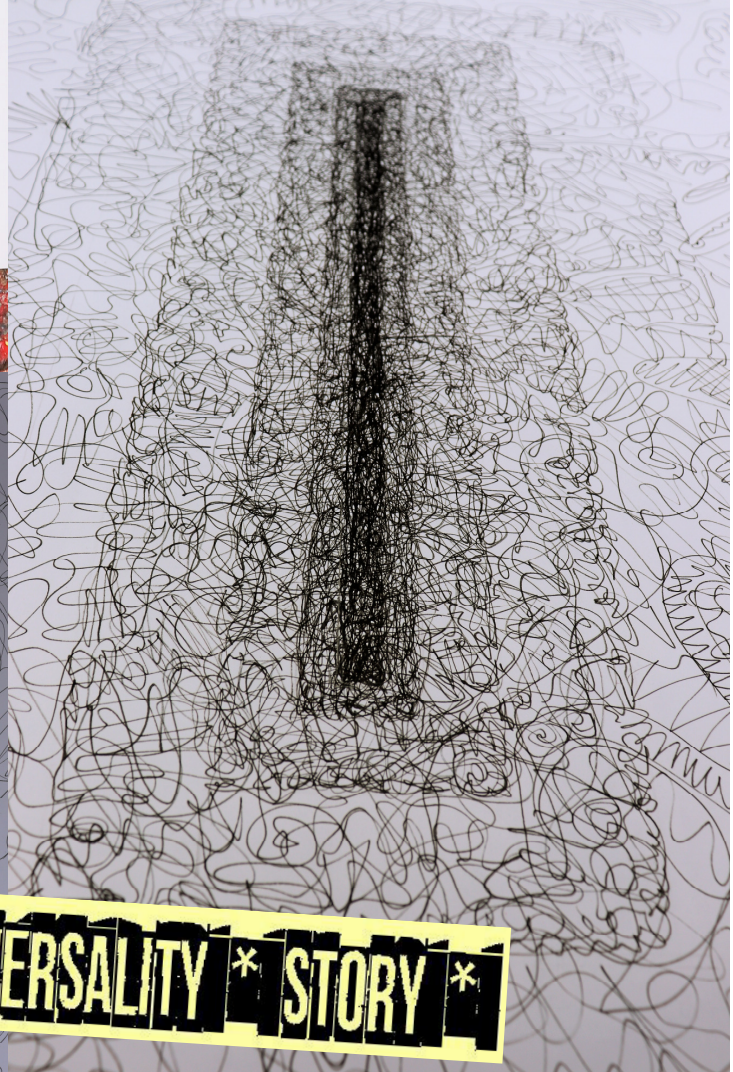
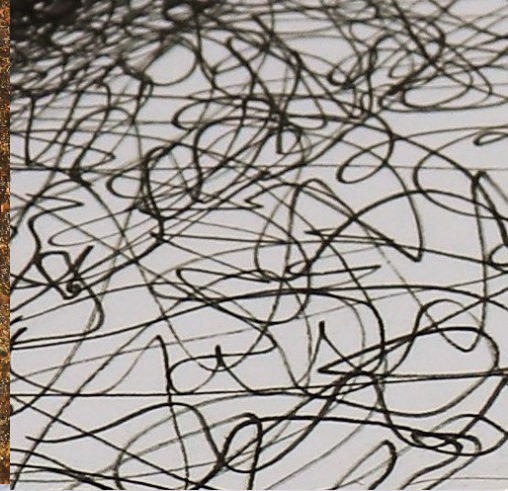
It's a scribble. That's what it is. The stuff the kids can do when they grip the pen like a stick and rip it across the paper. Anyone can do this. This is the purest universality known to art. No subject is necessary. Absolutely no skills are necessary apart from the most rudimentary gross motors.

The instructions on how to do this are not secretly hidden in an ornately crafted wooden chest presented on a golden plinth in a cave at the top of a cloud-crested mountain. It is just a raw moment to express another indefinable moment. A moment of (and for) being. This is the ultimate universality in art, along with the iDot. All are welcome.

One pen and a (big) piece of paper. That is all that is required. With no colouring book lines saying what you can and can't do. No technology to interface with. No power to consume but the energy of ones own body. Portersteve's Scribble artworks are designed to be the antithesis of a world obsessed with skill and progress and improvement and striving and career trajectory and the ubiquitous judgement of others.

You can ask: what is the point of it? But that question can be asked of anything that is beyond providing for our core needs such as food and shelter. Everything beyond our needs is fluff. Fluff includes everything from Scribbles and the Sistine Chapel. Yes it does. And, as a side-issue, by asking: What is the point? You risk getting yourself into all sorts of hot water that isn't in a jacuzzi.

All you need as an adult is a bit of bravery to face that empty space and say: OK.
It might be good training for later, if a reason is required.



* IDENTITY * SECRECY * UNIVERSALITY * STORY *

portersteve Novels



Not a page-turner...

Instead of imprisoning a story within a book, Portersteve's Novel artworks display the entire text in one huge collaged hit.

The writing is shown in three distinct yet overlapping layers. The smallest is the novel-text itself, ranging from 80000-10000 words at a perfectly readable size. The medium, fainter text is an abridged version of the whole, so the entire story can be consumed in around twenty minutes. The largest, even fainter text is a blurb, teasing in potential readers (or viewers).

People viewing the artworks can begin in the top left and work their way along to the bottom right. Or they can sample the story anywhere, reading sections or sentences as they like. In this way they can travel through time and play games with our apparent linear perceptions.

The stories are all written by Portersteve. This isn't Dickens.

Many artworks have been (and are) based on familiar stories, like a still from the film. Religious or historical events. Wars and peaces, myths and legends. Portersteve's Novel artworks use the "novel" format for delivering a story via an image that is essentially modern, using a basic symbol connected to the narrative. So no reading need take place at all. You can just look at the pictures.

The coloured papers used in the construction of the artwork are purposefully intense. The idea is to poke your eyes out (metaphorically), not coddle you in swishy earth-like organic greens. Portersteve will leave all that to others. The works are displayed on a triptych of canvases.

portersteve about artworks

Portersteve's artwork explores four main areas. It might sound serious, but it's not that serious.



According to some, we are simply a set of consumer choices, toys for the algorithm. Identity and our ability to prove it is part of everyday life with accounts and passwords and pins and the approaching biometric footsteps. Portersteve's Signature artworks nostalgically highlight a more organic method of proof. Portersteve's whole body of current work has an identity, with a "branded" look and a logo. According to Portersteve at least, there is something very funny about someone making an artwork out of their own name.



Hand in hand with identity comes secrecy. While Portersteve's artworks are mainly covered in white, underneath are hugely colourful paintings only revealed at the edges. The Secrets conceal another artwork from view, in opposition to the idea that all should be or can be visible. Many Portersteve artworks contain codes on the back or hidden within the main compositions. It is all about what we reveal both purposefully and accidentally. Whilst all this might sound like a poe-faced investigation about what it is to be human, Portersteve is more interested in the comedy-polemic, enjoying extreme views and reactions to his work.



Portersteve has created artworks that can be and are (albeit unintentionally) recreated as part of everyday life. We place a dot between every sentence. We write our own name. Kids might dip their hand in paint and press it down onto some paper. These artworks could be created by anyone and everyone. Portersteve is not anti-skill, he is pro-access and opportunity. Ideas are where the true action is, rather than craftsmanship. Putting aside all intellectual ambition, which is essentially fluff, Portersteve views all the artworks as entertainments. Something light for people to enjoy or enjoy not enjoying. Think of the work as a three minute pop single.



All artwork tells a story. Portersteve's Novels do this literally, showing whole novels all at once in giant collages. In contrast to where viewers are given every word, there are artworks where the meanings are solely and intentionally their responsibility. All Portersteve's current crop of artworks have evolved through story. The model by which they can be purchased is also story-based, where every transaction is a direct interaction. It is the opposite of click to buy. Portersteve will meet eyes with all, though usually not in an unpleasant way.

portersteve

World-class conceptual artworks Bespoke artist-attended events, worldwide

Events

Wherever you are in the world, Portersteve can travel to you, bringing with him a selection of his artworks and easels to display them upon.

Events might take place within a private residence with only a small number of guests, or as part of a party or in a larger cultural setting.

Portersteve can chat with guests about his work (or anything else).
The artwork (and the artist) are there to provide entertainment.

The idea is for Portersteve to *show* the artwork, not *sell* the artwork.

For sale

The artwork *is* for sale and Portersteve has the technology with him to complete transactions.

The wonderful and unique experience of buying an artwork directly from the artist who created it, gives every transaction a personal story.

Events by location

UK - £999

Europe - £3k,

North America - £5k,

Everywhere else except Australasia and the Pacific - £7k,

Australasia and the Pacific - £9k.

Booking

For more information and/or to book an event with Portersteve, simply email or call.



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